

EDITORIAL

The development of Theoretical Computer Science since its creation in 1975 has been most spectacular. The growth from four to twelve issues each year reflects both the establishment of our journal and the increase in research activity in our field all over the world. The qualitative changes are no less remarkable than the quantitative ones. New domains of computer science have opened up to theoretical study; newborn theories have grown up. As older areas mature, results become harder to establish and often deeper; methodologies take shape.

We believe that TCS should respond to changing needs. We introduced the section for “Notes” which enable fast publication of concise results, often in areas where the terminology is well-established and the background is already known. Such notes, with length at most eight printed pages, can be printed as soon as the manuscript is accepted.

With this issue of Fundamental Studies we feature contributions of quite another form. These are long, more self-contained, papers of various kinds. Some may solve long-standing open problems with a solution involving intricate constructions which cannot be condensed to a “normal” length. Others will introduce new definitions and notation to describe and formalize some computational phenomena, laying the foundation for future research and suggesting fruitful directions. Yet others will fulfil the recurrent need to collect up scattered ideas in the literature and present a unified account of progress to date. Research in theory is not limited to the proof of theorems. Its aim is also to clarify ideas and to forge the languages in which these ideas may in future be expressed and taught.

Though the boundary between “fundamental studies” and normal papers is fairly arbitrary, length will be the most obvious criterion. We shall particularly welcome long papers derived from doctoral dissertations or other long-term studies. Too often these are fragmented for publication and the overall view is lost. A specially prepared survey of some developing field will also be considered very suitable. Here, perhaps, an early notification of one’s intentions to the Editor-in-Chief may prevent duplicated effort.

The procedure for refereeing and accepting or rejecting submitted papers remains unchanged. Notes, normal papers and fundamental studies are handled identically by the Editors of TCS. Following anonymous refereeing, a recommendation as to revision, rejection or publication is made by the Editor to whom the paper was sent. (The Editor-in-Chief and Associate Editor are here regarded as ordinary members of the Editorial Board.) The changes we have described are intended to

improve the communication of ideas and results in our journal and we hope will be welcomed by readers and future authors. A scientific journal should be a living and changing organism, responsive to its public. The Editors of TCS always welcome any comment or suggestions from both categories of users.

**M. NIVAT
Editor-in-Chief**